MARVEL COMICS GROUP 12¢

the X-MEN

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INTRODUCING "THE STRANGER"

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X-MEN
THE MOST UNUSUAL TEEN-AGERS OF ALL TIME!

NO! YOU'RE NOT SEEING THINGS! THIS TITLE MEANS WHAT IT SAYS...!

"THE TRIUMPH OF MAGNETO!"

INTRODUCING: THE NEW, STARTLING, STAGGERING MENACE OF... The STRANGER!

CYCLOPS! WE RECEIVED YOUR EMERGENCY ALARM! WHAT'S PROFESSOR X WORKING ON? WHAT HAPPENED?

QUIET, ANGEL! YOU AND THE OTHERS GATHER 'ROUND! HE'LL EXPLAIN!

IT MUST BE HIS NEW RADAR-IMAGE BEAM! IT CONVERTS RADAR BLIPS INTO PICTURES OF THE OBJECT!

WHEW! I WAS AFRAID WE WERE BEING ATTACKED!

IF YOU HAVE LOCATED A HITHERTO UNDISCOVERED, MUTANT, PROFESSOR, THAT MEANS WE X-MEN MUST REACH HIM BEFORE HE CAN BE RECRUITED BY MAGNETO!

YOU'RE RIGHT, JEAN! I USE THIS BEAM TO DETECT THE PRESENCE OF OTHER MUTANTS! I'M GETTING A NEW IMAGE NOW!

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LOOK! THE IMAGE IS ABOUT TO TAKE SHAPE!

BUT, WAIT...! SOMETHING IS HAPPENING! WHAT WAS THAT BLAST?

A WAVE OF SHEER FORCE IS FIGHTING THE IMAGE-BEAM! THE PICTURE WON'T TAKE FORM!

BUT--HOW CAN THAT BE?

LOOK OUT! SOMETHING HAS TO GIVE!

THE IMAGE EXPLODED! IT'S GONE!

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS MEANS? SOMEWHERE WITHIN RANGE OF MY DETECTING DEVICES, A SUPER-POWERED BEING EXISTS! A BEING SO POWERFUL, THAT MY IMAGE BEAM WAS SHATTERED BEFORE IT COULD PROJECT HIS PICTURE!

THIS MEANS THAT WHOEVER--OR WHATEVER--HE MAY BE, HE'S PROBABLY THE MOST DANGEROUS MUTANT WE'VE EVER FACED!

THEN WHY ARE WE PROCRASTINATING? WE'VE HEARD THE CLARION CALL TO BATTLE! LET US SALLY FORTH AND SLAY SOME DRAGONS!

IF OUR ENEMIES COULD BE BEATEN BY WORDS, HANK, YOU COULD WIN EVERY FIGHT SINGLE-HANDED!

WORDS ALONE ARE NOT MY SOLE STOCK IN TRADE, YOU JOCULAR JUVENILE!

LET IT NEVER BE SAID THAT THE BEAST IS NOT A FIGHTER PAR EXCELLANCE!

WATCH ME TAKE THAT CLOWN DOWN A PEG, GANG!

SLURP!

-GADZOOKS!- WHO COATED THAT CORNER OF THE ROOM WITH ICE?!!

JUST THAT LITTLE OLD FROSTPOT --ME!

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BETTER STOP OUR HIGH-FLYING FRIEND TELEKINETICALLY, JEAN, BEFORE HE GOES SAILING THRU A *WALL!*

WILL DO, SCOTTY!

DESIST, FEMALE! THIS IS AN AFFRONT TO MY *DIGNITY!*

EVEN *UPSIDE-DOWN* YOU'RE A *MESS!*

LET HIM DOWN *GENTLY,* JEAN!

THAT WILL BE *ENOUGH* HORSE-PLAY, BOBBY--- AND *ALL* OF YOU! McCOY MIGHT HAVE BEEN *INJURED* BY YOUR PRANK!

I'LL ASK YOU TO CONSERVE YOUR TALENTS, AND ENERGIES, FOR MORE *IMPORTANT* WORK!

SORRY, SIR! I GUESS WE JUST GOT CARRIED AWAY!

BUT NOW, LET US TURN TO A SMALL FURNISHED ROOM, NOT FAR AWAY...

THIS ROOM SUITS MY PURPOSES! I SHALL *TAKE* IT!

I'VE RENTED ROOMS TO WEIRDOS BEFORE, BUT *THAT* ONE TAKES THE CAKE!

LOOK, CURLY, I'M GLAD YOU'RE SATISFIED, BUT I'LL EXPECT A FULL WEEK'S SCRATCH IN *ADVANCE!*

SCRATCH?

HOW SQUARE CAN YOU *BE?* YOU KNOW--CABBAGE, JACK, MOOLA, DOUGH--THE *RENT!!*

OH! YOU MEAN *MONEY!*

WELL NOW, AREN'T *YOU* THE BRIGHT BOY!

FORGIVE ME! I'M A *STRANGER* HERE--AND NOT YET FAMILIAR WITH YOUR IDIOMS OF SPEECH!

BUT IF *MONEY* IS WHAT YOU WANT...

HERE--TAKE WHAT YOU NEED! AND NOW, BE GOOD ENOUGH NEVER TO ENTER THIS ROOM AGAIN UNTIL I HAVE CHECKED OUT!

GOOD DAY TO YOU, MADAM!

SOMETIME LATER, THE "STRANGER" LEAVES HIS ROOM AND JOINS THE MILLING CROWD IN THE STREETS BELOW...

I MUST FAMILIARIZE MYSELF WITH THIS CITY, AND WITH ITS PEOPLE....!

THE TRAFFIC IS TOO HEAVY! IT TAKES TOO LONG TO CROSS THESE BUSY THOROUGHFARES!

I MARVEL AT THE ***PATIENCE*** OF THOSE PEOPLE--THE WAY THEY STAND AND WAIT FOR THE TRAFFIC TO STOP!

BUT ***I*** CANNOT BEAR TO WASTE TIME SO NEEDLESSLY--NOT WHEN IT IS SO EASY TO MERELY WALK ***OVER*** THE TRAFFIC!

I'VE SEEN ALL ***KINDS*** OF NUTTY PUBLICITY STUNTS--BUT ***THAT*** ONE IS THE ***MOST!***

LOOK!! THAT ***MAN!*** HE'S WALKING ON ***THIN AIR!!***

MAYBE HE'S WALKING ON INVISIBLE ***GLASS!***

HE'S PROBABLY WEARIN' SOME NEW KIND OF ***HELIUM*** BELT, OR SOMETHING!!

LOOK HOW HE JUST ***STANDS*** THERE--LIKE THERE'S NOTHING ***TO*** IT!!

EVERYONE IS ***STARING!*** I'M CAUSING TOO MUCH OF A COMMOTION!

I'D BETTER GET AWAY FROM THEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! I DETEST INQUISITIVE ***CROWDS!***

WHY IS SOMETHING ATTRACTING ME TO THIS PARTICULAR BUILDING--THIS PARTICULAR ***WALL??***

SOMEONE GET A ***DOCTOR!*** WOMEN ARE FAINTIN' LIKE ***FLIES*** AROUND HERE!!

I FEEL I AM BEING IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN TOWARDS--***WHAT??***

THERE ARE ***OTHERS*** HERE--WATCHING --AS THOUGH THEY ***EXPECTED*** ME!

WELCOME! I AM--***MAGNETO!!*** MY FOLLOWERS AND I HAVE BEEN ***WAITING*** FOR YOU!

MEANWHILE, THE UNCANNY ***X-MEN*** HAVE BEGUN THEIR ***OWN*** SEARCH FOR THE SUPER-POWERED BEING WHOSE PRESENCE IN THE CITY HAD BEEN DETECTED BY PROFESSOR X---!

HOLY COW!! ***WHO'S THAT??***

FORGIVE ME FOR STARTLING YOU, BUT HAVE YOU SEEN ANYTHING ***STRANGE*** FROM YOUR VANTAGE POINT LATELY?

MISTER, I'M ***LOOKIN'*** AT THE STRANGEST THING I EVER SAW--OR EVER ***HOPE*** TO SEE!!

I'VE CIRCLED OVER THE CITY ***TWICE***-- AND STILL NO TRACE OF MY QUARRY!

IT'S A STRANGE FEELING TO SEARCH FOR SOMEONE WITHOUT KNOWING ***WHOM*** YOU'RE SEEKING!!

I HOPE THE ***OTHERS*** ARE HAVING BETTER LUCK!

AND, SPEAKING OF "THE OTHERS"---

I TELL YOU OVER A DOZEN PEOPLE ***SWORE*** THEY SAW SOME JOKER WALKING ON AIR!!

THAT'S OKAY! BUT WHAT ABOUT THEM SAYIN' HE WALKED RIGHT ***THRU*** A BUILDING WALL?

A ***LEAD*** AT LAST! IT MUST BE ***HIM!***

CAN YOU ***DESCRIBE*** THE MAN YOU WERE REFERRING TO?

WHY ARE ***YOU*** SO INTERESTED, FELLA? WHO ***ARE*** YOU? NEVER SAW YOU AROUND THIS BEAT BEFORE!

WHY THE DARK GLASSES ON A CLOUDY DAY LIKE THIS? WE'VE GOT ORDERS TO INVESTIGATE ***ANYBODY*** SUSPICIOUS!

LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT YOU WITHOUT THE CHEATERS, PAL!

NO! I ***CAN'T*** TAKE MY GLASSES OFF! DON'T ***ASK*** ME! IT'S ***IMPOSSIBLE!!*** ***NO!***

NOW ***LOOK,*** MISTER--ALL WE WANNA DO IS SEE IF WE ***RECOGNIZE*** YOU FROM ANYWHERE!

AND, ONLY A GUY ON THE ***LAM*** WOULD BE SO SCARED OF REMOVING HIS GLASSES!

NOW, C'MON --GET THOSE THINGS ***OFF!***

OKAY, CHARLIE! I GOT HIS SPECS! NOW TAKE A LOOK AND--**WHAT'S THAT?!!**

BACK! STAND BACK! KEEP **AWAY** FROM ME, IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIVES! I **TRIED** TO WARN YOU!

NOW I GOT IT! HE'S ONE OF THE **X-MEN**-- HE MUST BE THE MUTANT CALLED **CYCLOPS!!**

I'VE GOT TO GROPE FOR MY SPECIALLY TREATED GLASSES!! NO MATTER **HOW** TIGHTLY I KEEP MY EYES SHUT, **SOME** OF MY POWER RAY KEEPS GETTING THRU!

HIS EYES ARE LIKE LIVING **DISINTEGRATOR BEAMS!!** THEY SHATTER WHATEVER THAT RAY TOUCHES! NO **WONDER** HE WOULDN'T REMOVE HIS GLASSES!!

MY **GUN!!** HE ACCIDENTALLY **HIT** IT--CUT THRU IT LIKE A KNIFE THRU BUTTER!! HE'S MORE **DANGEROUS** THAN THE ONE WE'RE **LOOKING** FOR!

BUT, A SPLIT-SECOND LATER...

AHH! I FOUND MY PROTECTIVE LENSES AT **LAST!** NOW TO--**WHA-??**

THE **BEAST!!** YOU GOT ME IN THE NICK OF TIME, HANK!

I ASSUMED THAT THE MINIONS OF THE LAW HAD **ENOUGH** TO DO WITHOUT **YOU** ADDING TO THEIR BURDENS!

NOW HOLD TIGHT WHILE I BRING YOU TO JOIN **ICEMAN!**

HURRY, HANK! I THINK I HAVE A LEAD AS TO WHERE THE NEW MUTANT IS, AND WHAT HIS **POWERS** ARE!

LOOK AT THAT **ICE CYLINDER** UP AHEAD! IT MUST BE **BOBBY'S!**

WITHOUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, THE TWO DARING X-MEN PLUMMET HEADLONG INTO THE TALL, HOLLOW TUBE OF *ICE* THAT HAS SUDDENLY SPOUTED UP IN FRONT OF THEM....!

HANG ON, SCOTTY! WE'RE TAKING THE **PLUNGE!**

I SEE THEM *BELOW*-- ICEMAN AND MARVEL GIRL-- STANDING BY!

AS SOON AS YOU LAND-- *DUCK*, SO I WON'T COME CRASHING DOWN ON *TOP* OF YOU, HANK!

NO DANGER OF *THAT*, SCOTTY! THE KID TURNED IT INTO A FLYING SLIDE!

OKAY, JEANIE GAL, YOU CAN SLOW US DOWN *TELEKINETICALLY* NOW!

I'LL DO MY *BEST*, HANK!

GOOD GIRL, JEAN! I WAS *WONDERING* WHAT WOULD SLOW US DOWN WHEN WE HIT BOTTOM!

SOMEHOW, WHEN *HE* SAYS "*GOOD GIRL*" IT'S BETTER THAN RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN SAYING "*MY DARLING!*"

BOBBY, EVER SINCE YOU STOPPED YOUR CHILDISH HI-JINKS, YOU'VE BECOME POSITIVELY *MASTERFUL* WITH YOUR ICE POWER!

THANKS, JEAN --BUT I'M NOT DONE *YET!*

ICEMAN, I'VE A GOOD IDEA WHERE OUR MUTANT *IS!* BUT I NEED A PLACE TO STAND ABOVE THE GROUND, WHERE I CAN STUDY THE NEARBY BUILDINGS!

I SORT OF *EXPECTED* THAT YOU'D ASK! IT'LL ONLY TAKE A *SEC!*

I'LL BUILD YOU A STAIR-WAY OF *ICE!* IT'LL GIVE YOU *COLD FEET*, BUT IT OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK!

AND, AT THAT MOMENT...

YOU WANT ME TO *JOIN* YOU? I DO NOT UNDERSTAND!

I AM A *STRANGER* HERE! WHO *ARE* YOU? *WHY* SHOULD I JOIN YOU?

WE'LL *SHOW* YOU!! *WATCH* --!

EVERY OBJECT IN THE ROOM-- FLYING INTO THE AIR--WRAPPING ITSELF ABOUT ME!! AS THOUGH THEY ARE ALL LIVING THINGS!!

THIS IS WHY YOU MUST JOIN US!! BECAUSE I AM-- ***POWER!!*** I SHALL ONE DAY REDUCE THE HUMAN RACE TO ***SLAVERY,*** SO THAT ***HOMO SUPERIOR*** CAN TAKE OVER! AND THOSE WHO ***SERVE*** ME, SHALL REAP THE REWARDS!

GOOD, MASTER! ***GOOD!***

EACH OF US HAS A MUTANT POWER OF HIS OWN! IF ***MAGNETO*** IS DONE WITH YOU, ***MASTERMIND*** SHALL GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION...!

WITH A SINGLE GESTURE, MASTERMIND CREATES ONE OF HIS INCREDIBLE ***ILLUSIONS,*** AS "THE STRANGER" SEEMS TO FIND HIMSELF AT THE OCEAN'S BOTTOM....

WHAT ***HAPPENED??*** WHERE ***AM*** I??

SUDDENLY, THE ILLUSION ***CHANGES***-- AND THE BEWILDERED STRANGER SEEMS TO FIND HIMSELF STANDING HELPLESSLY WITHIN A SEA OF SMOKY LAVA!

I HAVE SEEN ***ENOUGH!*** THEY MUST BE MADE TO REALIZE THAT ***I*** MAY NOT BE ***TOYED WITH*** IN SUCH A MANNER!

IT IS NOW TIME FOR ***ME*** TO GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF ***MY*** POWER-- POWER THAT NONE CAN EVEN ***SUSPECT!***

IN ONE BRIEF MICRO-SECOND, MASTERMIND'S ILLUSION IS COMPLETELY DISPELLED, AS THE STRANGER EMITS A SUDDEN BLAST OF ENERGY THAT SEVERS HIS BONDS AND MAKES A SHAMBLES OF MAGNETO'S TEMPORARY HEADQUARTERS!

BUT, THE LARGEST PART OF HIS *RAGE* IS DIRECTED AGAINST *MASTERMIND*--!

A *RAY!!* TURNING MASTERMIND INTO A *SOLID BLOCK OF MATTER!*

AS SOLID MATTER, HIS WEIGHT IS SO GREATLY INCREASED THAT NOT EVEN THE BUILDING'S *FLOOR* CAN HOLD HIM!

MAGNETO! MAGNETO! SAVE US!

CRA-A-A-SH!

GOOD HEAVENS!! WHAT WAS THAT??

HELP! POLEEEEEECE!

SOMETHING CAME CRASHING DOWN FROM THE CEILING--GOING THRU THE VERY *FLOOR!! HELP* --BEFORE WE'RE ALL *KILLED!*

DID YOU HEAR *THAT*?? IT CAME FROM THE AREA THE MAN WHO WALKED ON AIR WAS REPORTED IN!

WE'VE GOT TO REACH HIM BEFORE ANYONE *ELSE* DOES--ESPECIALLY *MAGNETO*!!

LET'S GO!

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE! SOME TREMENDOUS FORCE ACTUALLY SHATTERED THE BRICK WALL!

IT'S ONE OF THE *X-MEN*!! SOME GRAVE FANTASTIC *MENACE* MUST BE WAITING INSIDE!

MAGNETO!! SO, *YOU'RE* THE ONE RESPONSIBLE--!!

THE *ANGEL*!! YOU DARE ATTACK US ON OUR *HOME GROUNDS*??! *THIS* TIME YOU WILL SURELY TASTE DEFEAT!

MAYBE SO--BUT I'LL MAKE SURE THAT *YOU* TASTE IT *WITH* ME!

QUICKSILVER!! USE YOUR *SPEED* --*STOP HIM*!

UNHHH--!

GOOD WORK! YOU SMASHED INTO HIM BEFORE HE COULD THINK TO FLAP A WING! NOW--*FINISH HIM OFF*!!

NO MATTER *HOW* FAST HE IS, ONE PUNCH IS ALL IT'LL TAKE TO--

WHA--? WHERE'D HE *GO*??

DO NOT *TOY* WITH HIM, QUICKSILVER! *FINISH HIM!*

WITH MY GREAT *SPEED*, IT IS ALMOST *TOO EASY!*

UHH! HIS FLAPPING WING UNEXPECTEDLY DEFLECTED MY BLOW!

OKAY, FELLA-- IF THAT'S HOW YOU *WANT* IT! *MY WINGS* AGAINST YOUR *SPEED!*

HOLD IT, ANGEL! *I'LL* SLOW 'IM DOWN SO YOU CAN HANDLE HIM WITH NO SWEAT!

THANKS, PARTNER! BUT I *STILL* THINK I COULD HAVE TAKEN HIM *ALONE!*

ICE!! FORMING ON PIETRO'S BODY-- NO! *NO!!*

WELL DONE, STRIPLING! *I'LL* IMMOBILIZE HIM NOW!

BUT, AT THAT MOMENT, THE *SCARLET WITCH* MAKES AN OMINOUS GESTURE...

NO! NONE SHALL HARM MY BROTHER WHILE I STILL POSSESS MY *HEX POWER!*

I CAN'T MAINTAIN MY EQUILIBRIUM! SOMETHING HAS THROWN ME OFF-BALANCE!

LEGGO OF ME, YA BIG APE! *I'M* NO DOORMAT!

MEANWHILE... I CAN'T *GET* AT MAGNETO! HE'S FORMED SOME SORT OF MAGNETIC SHIELD AROUND HIMSELF AND THAT *OTHER* CHARACTER!

MY MAGNETIC SHIELD WILL KEEP US SAFE!

I NEED NO SUCH SHIELD!

I SHALL NOW *DEPART*-- IN MY *OWN* MANNER!

NO! NOT *YET!* NOT TILL YOU VOW TO JOIN *ME!* I CANNOT PERMIT THE *X-MEN* TO GET YOU!

YOU MAY JOIN *ME*, IF YOU WISH! STEP INTO MY *CONE OF ENERGY!*

MASTER, WAIT!! WAIT FOR THE *TOAD!*

MAGNETO *VANISHED!!* AND NOW-- THE *TOAD* IS DISAPPEARING--!!

I HEAR A SOUND-- LIKE THE RUSHING OF A MIGHTY AIR CURRENT-- TOWARDS THE WALL-- BUT, I CAN'T *SEE* ANY-THING!

THEY'VE *GONE!!* BUT-- *WHERE??* *HOW??*

SECONDS LATER, THE INVISIBLE CONE OF ENERGY WHIRLS PAST *CYCLOPS* AND *MARVEL GIRL*, COM-PLETELY UNNOTICED!

STAY *BEHIND* ME, JEAN! WHATEVER IS AWAITING US UP THERE-- LET *ME* FACE IT FIRST!

THIS IS THE PLACE!! *ANGEL*-- ARE YOU THERE? WHAT *HAPPENED?*

CAREFUL, SCOTT! SOME TERRIBLE *POWER* MUST HAVE BEEN UNLEASHED IN THERE!

AND, IF ANYTHING *HAPPENED* TO YOU, MY DARLING, I COULDN'T *BEAR* IT!

THEN, SUDDENLY-- CYCLOPS SEES--

THE *SCARLET WITCH* IS HEXING THE ENTIRE *CEILING* DOWN ON ME!!

GOOD WORK, PARTNER! BUT, YOU CAN'T KEEP THAT UP FOREVER!

SHUT YOUR EYES, X-MAN!

IT WILL BE A *PLEASURE* TO OBLIGE!

THIS WILL TAKE CARE OF THAT USELESS DEBRIS-- AND THEN WE CAN GET ON WITH THE BUSINESS AT HAND!

MY COMPLIMENTS, CYKE! HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A HUMAN GARBAGE-DISPOSAL UNIT??!

ZZZZT!

JEAN-- *WAIT!* WHAT ARE YOU *DOING??*

SOMETHING I'VE *WANTED* TO DO FOR A *LONG TIME!* I WANT TO MATCH *MY TELEKINETIC POWER* AGAINST THE SCARLET WITCH'S *HEX POWER!*

BY KEEPING HER BUSY DUCKING FLYING OBJECTS, SHE WON'T HAVE TIME TO FOCUS A HEX ON ANY OF US!

ON *YOU??* DO YOU THINK *YOU* ARE OF ANY INTEREST TO *ME??*

DO NOT *FLATTER* YOURSELVES!

ALL I CARE ABOUT IS THE WELFARE OF MY *BROTHER!* HE MUST BE *UNFROZEN*, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

I DIDN'T AIM TO *HARM* HIM--JUST TO *STOP* 'IM!

PIETRO-- *SPEAK* TO ME!! PIETRO--!

STAY BACK! *I'LL* HELP HIM...!

NOBODY SPEAK!! I MUST CONCENTRATE *COMPLETELY!* EASY--EASY--!!

ONLY ENOUGH POWER TO DISINTEGRATE THE FROST!! IF I MISCALCULATE--EVEN BY A *HAIRSBREADTH*-- IT COULD BE *FATAL* TO HIM!!

THERE! THAT SHOULD *DO* IT!

NOW WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THEM?

YOU NEED DO *NOTHING* WITH US EVER AGAIN! WE HAVE SERVED MAGNETO FOR THE LAST TIME!

WANDA IS *RIGHT!* WE OWED HIM A DEBT-- BUT IT HAS BEEN REPAID-- MANY TIMES OVER!

WE SHALL SERVE HIM *NO LONGER!*

I ALWAYS *FELT* YOU DIDN'T BELONG WITH HIS BAND OF EVIL MUTANTS!

BUT, BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED--!

CYCLOPS!! WE'VE SEARCHED THE ENTIRE PLACE! MAGNETO AND THE OTHERS HAVE *VANISHED!*

THE ANGEL'S CONCLUSION IS ENTIRELY *CORRECT,* DISAPPOINTING THOUGH IT MAY BE!

WHERE COULD THEY HAVE *GONE* WITH THAT NEW MUTANT??

THE NEW MUTANT!! PROFESSOR X SAID HE WAS THE MOST POWERFUL OF *ALL!*

IF *MAGNETO* HAS ENLISTED HIM ON *HIS* SIDE, THEN OUR MISSION IS A TOTAL FAILURE!

UNLESS-- WE CAN EVEN THE ODDS BY HAVING THE TWO OF *YOU* JOIN THE X-MEN!

NO! WE HAVE HAD *ENOUGH* OF CONFLICT!!

BUT, THE CAUSE WE FIGHT FOR IS A JUST ONE!

THE WAY SHE LOOKS AT HIM! AS THOUGH SHE TOO--OH NO! IT CAN'T BE!!

YOUR WORDS HAVE THE RING OF TRUTH TO THEM! IF ONLY---

NO, MY SISTER! IT IS I WHO GIVE THE ORDERS NOW!

WE SHALL RETURN TO OUR HOME--IN CENTRAL EUROPE, AND FORGET THE ENDLESS BATTLE OF MUTANT AGAINST MUTANT--!

BUT, SOMEDAY WE MAY RETURN! SOMEDAY, THE FATE OF MANKIND MAY HINGE UPON OUR ENTERING THE BATTLE ONCE MORE!

MEANWHILE, THE "STRANGER'S" CONE OF ENERGY COMES TO A HALT DEEP WITHIN A LONELY WOODED AREA...

WE HAVE JOURNEYED FAR ENOUGH! PREPARE FOR DISSOLVEMENT!

DISSOLVEMENT??

THIS IS THE MOMENT WHEN MY ENERGY CONE DISSOLVES INTO THE NOTHINGNESS IT CAME FROM!

TELL ME--WHO ARE YOU?? EXACTLY WHAT POWER DO YOU POSSESS? YOU SEEM TO BE ALMOST AS MIGHTY AS I--ALMOST THE EQUAL OF MAGNETO!!

I AM MERELY--A STRANGER!

MAKE HIM TELL YOU WHAT HIS POWER IS, MASTER! MAKE HIM TELL!

SILENCE, TOAD!

NOW, LISTEN!! I AM MASTER OF MY BAND OF MUTANTS! WHEN I ASK--OTHERS ANSWER! EVEN YOU!! NOW-- WHAT IS YOUR MUTANT POWER?

ARROGANT FOOL! I AM NO MUTANT!

AS FOR MY POWER, IT IS GREATER BY FAR THAN YOU CAN EVEN IMAGINE!!

YOU'RE GROWING!! GETTING LARGER --RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES!! BUT--YOU CAN'T BE GIANT-MAN!!

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I TOLD YOU-- I AM A STRANGER!

BUT, I AM A STRANGER DIFFERENT FROM ANY YOU HAVE EVER KNOWN! FAR, FAR DIFFERENT!

TOAD!! COME BACK! I AM STILL MASTER HERE! I AM STILL-- MAGNETO!

YOUR SIZE CANNOT DEFEAT ME! I POSSESS THE POWER OF MAGNETISM! I AM SUPREME! YOU YET SHALL SERVE ME!

SAVE US, MASTER!! DO NOT LET THE STRANGER HARM US!

I GROW WEARY OF YOUR WORDS! I SHALL PLACE THIS THIN FILM OF ANTI-MAGNETIC-MEMBRANE OVER YOU, TO QUIET YOU!

I'LL DESTROY YOU FOR THIS!! THOSE WHO DO NOT SERVE ME MUST DIE!!

MASTER! WHAT HAS HE DONE TO US?? I- I CANNOT MOVE!!

AT THAT MOMENT, BACK AT X-MEN HEADQUARTERS...

WE FOUND MASTER-MIND IN THE CELLAR, SIR! IT TOOK ALL OF US TO CARRY HIM!

HE'S ALIVE--BUT SOMETHING HAS ALTERED THE VERY MOLECULES OF HIS BODY!

IT COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN THE ONE WE'RE SEEKING!

DO YOU THINK HE'S AS DANGEROUS AS MAGNETO HIMSELF, SIR??

DANGEROUS AS MAGNETO?

THE ONE WE SEEK HAS POWER ENOUGH TO SHAKE THE UNIVERSE! MAGNETO IS BUT A CHILD COMPARED TO THE STRANGER!! WE MUST FIND HIM--AT ONCE!!

WITHIN MINUTES, A HELICOPTER TAKES TO THE AIR, GUIDED BY THE MOST BRILLIANT MUTANT BRAIN OF ALL TIME... THE BRAIN OF *PROFESSOR XAVIER!*

FLY DUE WEST! I CAN MENTALLY RECEIVE HIS EMANATIONS AS THOUGH AN ARROW IN MY MIND IS POINTING TO HIM!

THEN, AFTER A FEW MINUTES OF SPEEDY FLIGHT...

GO, MY X-MEN! YOU WILL FIND HIM JUST AHEAD! BUT, GUARD YOURSELVES AT ALL TIMES!

LOOK!! MAGNETO-- AND THE *TOAD*-- WRAPPED UP IN SOME SORT OF *COCOONS!*

ANYONE STRONG ENOUGH TO TREAT *MAGNETO* SO CAVALIERLY WILL GIVE *US* THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES!

ICEMAN! DO YOU SEE ANY SIGNS OF-- THE *STRANGER??*

NOT *YET*, CYKE! BUT HE MUST BE AROUND *SOMEWHERE!*

STOP!! DON'T *TOUCH* THOSE COCOONS -- *ANY* OF YOU!

BACK! *BACK*-- IF YOU VALUE YOUR *LIVES!*

SOME STRANGE *FORCE*-- SHOOTING OUT--!

THE PROFESSOR WAS *RIGHT!!* ANOTHER SECOND, AND THE WISPS OF WHATEVER THIS IS WOULD HAVE ENVELOPED *ME*, TOO!

THEN, AT THAT SECOND, THE *STRANGER* AGAIN APPEARS--!

THOSE COCOONS WILL *PROTECT* THEM FOR THE *JOURNEY* THEY ARE ABOUT TO TAKE!

I CAN *GUESS* THE JOURNEY YOU REFER TO! ITS DESTINATION IS NO PLACE ON *EARTH*, IS IT??

OF *COURSE* NOT! HAVE I NOT *SAID* I AM--A *STRANGER*!??!!

A STRANGER FROM--THE *STARS*!!

MY PEOPLE ARE GREATLY INTERESTED IN *MUTATIONS*!! I JOURNEY FROM PLANET TO PLANET, TAKING SPECIMENS OF MUTANTS BACK TO MY WORLD--FOR STUDY! I DID NOT KNOW *WHOM* TO TAKE FROM EARTH...

BUT THEN, THE ONE WHO CALLS HIMSELF *MAGNETO* INSISTED I ALLY MYSELF WITH *HIM*! AND SO, I CHOOSE TO TAKE HIM--AND THE OTHER, WHOSE LOYALTY IS SO TOUCHING!

WE SHALL NEVER RETURN!

THEY'RE GONE! IT--IT HAPPENED SO SUDDENLY--SO UNEXPECTEDLY!! I--NEVER IMAGINED IT WOULD END--LIKE THIS!

MAGNETO GONE! AT LAST! AT LONG LAST!

HE WANTED TO FIND THE "STRANGER" BEFORE WE DID! AND HE SUCCEEDED! HE THOUGHT HE HAD BEATEN US! BUT, IT TURNED OUT TO BE MAGNETO'S FINAL TRIUMPH!

WILL THIS MEAN--DISBANDING THE X-MEN, SIR?

OF COURSE NOT! THERE WILL STILL BE MANY MENACES TO MANKIND FOR US TO BATTLE!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?? WE HEARD AN EXPLOSION-- THERE WAS A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT--AND THEN-- HEY!! IT'S THE X-MEN!!

BEAST! SLOW THEM DOWN! THEY MUSTN'T SEE ME! MY IDENTITY MUST NOT BE MADE PUBLIC!

I'LL HANDLE IT WITH DISPATCH, SIR!

STOP! WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

WATCH IT, BOYS! HE'S UP TO SOMETHING!

HOLY SMOKE! DID YOU SEE HIM SPIN AROUND?? HE ALMOST HAS A HYPNOTIC EFFECT!

BEAST-- SLOW DOWN! WE WEREN'T AIMING TO HURT YOU!

I SHOULD HOPE NOT! I'M FAR TOO LOVABLE TO BECOME A STATISTIC!

EASY, PROFESSOR! YOU'LL BE SAFELY ABOARD IN A SECOND!

THANK YOU, BOYS! NOW--SUMMON THE BEAST!

OKAY, YOU ANIMATED JUMPIN' BEAN! THE PROF SAYS ALL ABOARD!!

WATCH IT, BOBBY! DUCK YOUR HEAD!

TAKE 'ER UP, ANGEL! HANK'S HANGING ON OUTSIDE! HEAD BACK FOR THE SCHOOL!

WHAT SHEER, STARK DRAMA! ONE INGROWN TOENAIL, AND I'D BE A DEAD MAN!

NOT LONG AFTERWARDS...

AHHH, THE OLD HOME-STEAD! IT'LL BE GOOD TO SIT BACK AND RELAX WITH A DIFFERENTIAL CALCULUS PROBLEM FOR A FEW HOURS!

BUT, BEFORE ANY SERIOUS "RELAXING" IS ATTEMPTED, THE X-MEN ADOPT THEIR USUAL PRECAUTIONARY *SECURITY MEASURES*...

MY WALL-SOUNDINGS ARE COMPLETE, SIR! NO HIDDEN MIKES, WIRES, OR ANY SUCH DEVICES!

MY INTUITIVE *BRAIN* SENSES NO UNEXPECTED DANGER! ALL THAT REMAINS IS ANGEL'S *VISUAL* REPORT!

ALL CLEAR, AS FAR AS *I* CAN SEE, SIR!

VERY WELL, THEN! LET US PROCEED!

MOMENTS LATER, IN THE STUDY OF PROFESSOR XAVIER...

BEFORE DISMISSING YOU, SCOTT, I THOUGHT WE WOULD REMOVE SOME NAMES FROM OUR *CEREBRO* MACHINE!

I SEE, PROFESSOR! YOU FEEL THAT CERTAIN MENACES TO MANKIND CAN NOW BE CONSIDERED --*DISPOSED OF?*

EXACTLY!

IT'S BEEN A LONG, HARD ROAD, CYCLOPS-- FOR *ALL* OF YOU! BUT, YOU HAVE ACQUITTED YOURSELVES WITH *HONOR!*

MAGNETO

ASTERMIND

SCARLET WITCH

QUICKSILVER

BLOB

UNUS

TOAD

BUT, SUDDENLY-- BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED...

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP

PROFESSOR! WHAT'S *HAPPENING??*

CEREBRO HAS DETECTED A *NEW* MENACE!

I'VE NEVER SEEN A MERE ELECTRONIC DEVICE REGISTER SUCH AN EXTREME CONDITION OF *PANIC!* EVERY CIRCUIT IS STRAINED TO THE BREAKING POINT!

BEEP BEEP BEEP

WHATEVER IT *IS* THAT'S OUT THERE --THREATENING US-- IT IS THE MOST POWERFUL, MOST DEADLY DANGER WE HAVE EVER FACED! AND, IT'S ALMOST *UPON* US!

The END

THUS, ONE STRANGE SAGA COMES TO AN END AS *ANOTHER,* STILL STRANGER ONE, BEGINS! THIS TALE HAS MARKED A *TURNING POINT* IN THE LIVES AND DESTINIES OF THE *X-MEN*... AND, BEGINNING NEXT ISSUE, FATE HAS MANY NEW AND UNEXPECTED PITFALLS THAT AWAIT THEM! SO, WATCH FOR *X-MEN #12,* FILLED WITH THE MIGHTY MARVEL MAGIC, AND STARRING THE MOST UNUSUAL TEEN-AGERS OF ALL TIME!

MINUTEMEN

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